



amnesty international

U. S. A. GROUP 30

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ARGENTINE DETAINED WITHOUT CHARGE OR TRIAL

Sr. Pascual Angel REYES is an Argentinian worker who has been imprisoned in Buenos Aires Province since 1974 but was never charged with a specific crime. He was arrested in July 1974 at his parents' home by a group of armed men in civilian clothes who took him to the Buenos Aires Police Headquarters, where he was severely beaten.

Sr. Reyes was a worker who specialized in plumbing and upholstery. He had joined the Mechanics' Union in 1971 but was never active. There is no evidence to suggest that Sr. Reyes was ever engaged in direct political activities; he claims to be a member of the Peronist Party but has held no offices and has not participated in any activities. Indeed, at age 26 (as of January 1981), he has never voted.

Sr. Reyes is detained under Article 23 of the Argentinian Constitution. Argentinian jurists have always argued that administrative detention under Article 23 was envisaged as a temporary measure, but since the military coup d'état in March 1976 and the subsequent state of siege, prisoners so held have faced lengthy and indefinite periods of confinement. Many of the prisoners held under this P.E.N. (Spanish-language acronym for "National Executive Power") have not been informed of the reason for their arrest, nor have they been asked to make a formal statement; Sr. Reyes has been held without charge or trial.

Prisoners held under P.E.N. are allowed to opt for exile rather than face lengthy imprisonment under Article 23. This right of option ("derecho de opción") was suspended in 1976 but was reintroduced in a restricted form on September 1, 1977, subject to the government's approval. Sr. Reyes was offered this right of option, but it was withdrawn from him after he tried to exercise it.

Amnesty International considers Pascual Angel Reyes to be a prisoner of conscience who is imprisoned as a result of his political beliefs, and it urges that Sr. Reyes, and all others similarly situated, should be released.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL is an independent, non-partisan, non-violent organization which has consultative status with the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the Organization of American States and the Organization of African Unity. It endeavors to ensure the right for everyone to hold and express his beliefs.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part () In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date _____ Reason _____

Declassify on